

**University Avenue Central Corridor Task Force**  
**August 22, 2006**  
**Concordia University, Room 213 Library & Technology Building**  
**Meeting Summary**

**Task Force members present:** Julie Causey (co-chair), Veronica Burt, Betty Charles, James Erkel, Joan Grzywinski, Courtney Henry, Vatou Her, Seitu Jones, Richard Kleinbaum, Juan Linares, Nieeta Presley, Jonathan Sage-Martinson, Robert Straughn, Bao Vang, Anne White, Brian Winkelaar

**Task Force members absent:** Reggie Aligada (co-chair), Bryon Moore, Mai Thor

**Staff present:** Melvin Carter, Donna Drummond, Shawntera Hardy, Va-Megn Thoj, Sarah Zorn

**Others present:** Alicia Vap, Jo Haberman, Mark Voerding, Karen Lyons, Eric Weiss, Art Weddington, Chee Lor

The meeting was called to order by co-chair Julie Causey. Julie welcomed everyone and briefly reviewed the agenda for the day and approved the meeting notes from the July 25, 2006 meeting.

Julie then asked all in attendance to introduce themselves, including audience members.

Gretchen Nicholls, Executive Director, Center for Neighborhoods, gave a presentation on the Corridor Housing Initiative (Initiative). As a courtesy, Gretchen explained to the audience that the crew taping the meeting was working on a promo for the Initiative. She stated that the work of the Initiative is funded by Local Initiative Support Corporation (LISC), Family Housing Fund and Fannie Mae. The purpose of the Initiative is to assist residents in strategically changing areas in their communities. Gretchen stated that their work seeks to be lined up with the priorities of the City and include economic realities. She described their work as proactive planning that brings about partnerships and options through hands on community workshops. Much of the work is done on a parcel by parcel basis over a six month period.

Ann Forsyth, Director, Metropolitan Design Center, assisted Gretchen Nicholls with the Corridor Housing Initiative presentation. Ann stated that the Design Center's role is to provide materials that answer common questions (e.g. allowable density; types of affordable housing, design guidelines etc.). She stated that the most engaging exercise was the block exercise which allows participants to build their ideal development utilizing wood blocks.

Gretchen ended the presentation by expressing how excited she was about the work happening in the Corridor and that the Center for Neighborhoods would like to assist the taskforce in their work. For more information, please visit [www.housinginitiative.org](http://www.housinginitiative.org)

Task force members asked several follow-up questions, which Gretchen and staff responded to. Most of the questions and discussion focused on how the work of the Initiative could assist on University Avenue, how the issue of site control is handled by the Initiative and how the Initiative achieves the goal of creating an inclusive process.

Donna Drummond, PED planning staff, provided an overview of the task force schedule and process, publicity for the upcoming open house to be held on September 16 and next steps.

Mike Temali, Executive Director, Neighborhood Development Center, gave a PowerPoint Presentation on the Midtown Global Market located in Minneapolis. Mike started the presentation with an historical look at the concept. He stated that the building, which is the largest by square feet in the State of Minnesota except for the Mall of America, was occupied by Sears up until 1994. Some key points that Mike highlighted included:

- NDC was the lead developer on the project but had the assistance of a number of partners
- The area has a high rate of unemployment and poverty
- The area is one of the most diverse neighborhoods in the country
- The goal of the project and request of the City of Minneapolis was for the project to reflect the diversity and small businesses in the area
- The Global Market concept is anchored around food provided by businesses that are locally and minority owned (90 percent)
- The success of project stems from the sense of ownership held by the neighborhood

The task force meeting concluded with a PowerPoint presentation by Dr. Bruce Corrie, Professor, at Concordia University. Dr. Corrie's presentation focused on the World Cultural Heritage District Initiative that he is spearheading with the assistance of various community members. The goal of the concept is to capitalize on the diversity and culture that already exist on University Avenue and in surrounding neighborhoods. Dr. Corrie explained that the concept is a work in progress however; a resolution of support is being circulated throughout community for momentum.

The meeting adjourned at 7 p.m.

*Meeting summary prepared by Shawntera Hardy, PED planning staff.*